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SUBJECT: FIRST MEETING OF SECURITY EXPERTS HELD IN KINSHASA

¶1. (U) The first meeting of the Security Experts subcommission of the Tripartite Plus was held in Kinshasa January 30. Chaired by Congolese National Security Advisor Samba Kaputu and OSD Colonel Kelly Langdorf, the meeting was attended by delegations from Uganda, Burundi, MONUC (the UN Mission to the Congo), ONUB (the UN Mission to Burundi), and the European Union (as observers). Last-minute technical difficulties (per a copy of a January 29 diplomatic note from the GOR to the GDRC received by Embassy Kigali) prevented the Rwandan delegation from participating despite repeated assurances that it would take part. All those present noted with regret the apparent decision of the GOR not to take part, but agreed that the meeting should proceed consultatively and that the US as facilitator would ensure that the GOR received a copy of the discussion paper.

¶2. (SBU) The delegations received a background briefing from Colonel Langdorf on the role of the fusion cell and its relationship to the Tripartite process. During the exchange of views which followed, the DRC asked whether the fusion cell would have independent means to verify the raw data provided by each participating country (i.e., collection capability), and the Ugandan delegation head asked how possible military actions in response to fusion cell analysis/recommendations would be coordinated. Langdorf responded that the sort of collection capability envisioned by the Congolese was not something which had been considered by the Tripartite, and pointed to the involvement of MONUC as a key element in any military response which might result from fusion cell reports. Other, more technical questions regarding the security of communications, sourcing of information and protection of sources and coordination between capitals were also discussed. The delegations agreed on a document incorporating proposals made by the meeting participants which will be forwarded to the Tripartite Plus Ministers (text forwarded by e-mail). No official communique of the meeting was issued.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Private comments from the Ugandan and DRC delegations suggested frustration with Rwanda's absence, and many questioned why the Rwandans refused to take part after promising to do so. Nonetheless, the meeting facilitated a good exchange of views and, with training about to get underway in Kisangani, we are closer to having an operational forum to try to facilitate information sharing among the Tripartite member states. End comment.

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